

Message Text

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AMEMBASSY BELGRADE

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E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: SENV, ECE

SUBJECT: POSSIBLE ECE HIGH-LEVEL MEETING ON ENVIRONMENT

REF: A. GENEVA 10481, B. STATE 253661

1. WE CONSIDER STANOVNIK'S INFORMAL CONSULTATIONS OUT-LINED REF A CONSTRUCTIVE AND NECESSARY STEP IN PREPARATION FOR DISCUSSION AT ECE 33RD SESSION. ESSENTIAL ELEMENTS IN DECISION-MAKING PROCESS AT ECE WILL BE PROPOSED PRE-PARATION FOR AND MODALITIES OF PROPOSED HIGH-LEVEL MEETING ON ENVIRONMENT (HLM) AND SUBSTANTIVE ISSUE OF SPECIFIC AGENDA ITEMS AT HLM.

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2. AT LUNCHEON SCHEDULED FOR NOVEMBER 25, WE SUGGEST U.S. REP DRAW ON FOLLOWING POINTS, AS APPROPRIATE:

A) U.S. WOULD WISH TO REVIEW CAREFULLY PROPOSED TIME-TABLE AND PROCEDURES FOR PREPARATION OF HLM, INCLUDING HOW DOCUMENTATION AND DISCUSSION OF PROPOSED AGENDA ITEMS

WOULD BE HANDLED, AND SPECIFIC ACTION ANTICIPATED TO RESULT FROM HLM. PARA 4 REF B REFERS TO THE FOREGOING.

B) AS FOR POSSIBLE AGENDA ITEMS, WE ARE CONCERNED THAT SUBSTANCE NOT BE OVERWHELMED BY RHETORIC, THAT NUMBER OF ITEMS BE KEPT TO MINIMUM, AND THAT EACH OF THESE MEETS AGREED ECE CRITERIA. CONSENSUS AT SAEP CONSULTATIVE MEETING SEEMED CLEARLY TO ACCEPT TOPIC ON TRANSBOUNDARY AIR POLLUTION (TBAP). WIDESPREAD INTEREST WAS ALSO EXPRESSED ON LOW AND NON-WASTE TECHNOLOGY (LWT) WITH STANOVNIK STATING THAT FURTHER WORK NEEDED TO BE DONE TO SEE WHAT COULD COME OUT OF HLM AND LWT SUBJECT. WE ARE PREPARED TO CONSIDER LWT AND OTHER TOPICS WHICH CLEARLY MEET AGREED CRITERIA AND ON WHICH CONSENSUS DEVELOPS.

C) WE WOULD ALSO NEED TO BE CONVINCED THAT ANY ADDITIONAL AGENDA ITEM(S) WOULD ADD TO AND NOT SUBSTRACT FROM FINAL RESULT. WE ARE NOT YET PERSUADED THAT RIVER BASIN AND MARINE POLLUTION TOPIC WOULD BE ADDITIVE (ALTHOUGH WE WOULD BE PREPARED TO KEEP OPEN MIND ON THIS POSSIBILITY) ON NEGATIVE SIDE, THIS TOPIC IS ALREADY THE OBJECT OF CONSIDERABLE ACTIVITY IN OTHER INTERNATIONAL FORUMS (E.G., UNEP, IMCO) AND HAS RESULTED IN A NUMBER OF SUB- REGIONAL AGREEMENTS (HELSINKI, PARIS, RHINE RIVER). SECONDLY, WE ARE CONCERNED THAT PROLONGED DISCUSSION OF THAT TOPIC AT HLM MIGHT WELL DIMINISH CHANCES FOR CLEAR AND PRACTICAL LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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DECISIONS ON TBAP. FINALLY, THIS TOPIC MUST BE DEALT WITH ON RIVER BASIN BASIS, I.E., SUB-REGIONALLY, WHICH WOULD NOT BE IN CONFORMITY WITH THE ECE CRITERION CALLING FOR TOPICS OF INTEREST TO THE REGION AS A WHOLE. HOWEVER, WE WOULD BE WILLING TO HEAR FROM SECRETARIAT WHAT COULD BE DONE ON THIS REGIONALLY AT HLM THAT WOULD MEET AGREED CRITERIA.

D) IN CONTRAST TO ECE SECRETARIAT VIEW SET FORTH PARA 4, REF A, WE BELIEVE PARTICIPATION AT AND EFFECTIVENESS OF HLM WILL DEPEND NOT SO MUCH ON NUMBER OF TOPICS ON AGEND BUT ON HOW WELL PREPARATIONS ARE MADE TO DEAL WITH ANY TOPIC LISTED. WE LOOK FORWARD ESPECIALLY TO MAKING PROGRESS AT POLITICAL LEVEL ON TBAP. IN COOPERATION WITH ECE COMMITTEE ON WATER PROBLEMS, SAEP MIGHT WELL WISH TO TAKE UP RIVER BASIN/MARINE POLLUTION ITEM AS IMPORTANT FUTURE ELEMENT IN ITS WORK PROGRAM. STANOVNIK SEEMED TO APPRECIATE THIS POSSIBILITY DURING HIS RECENT WASHINGTON VISIT (PARA 5, REF B).

3. IN LIGHT OF FOREGOING, MISSION MAY INFORM SECRETARIAT THAT WE BELIEVE PRESENT STANOVNIK CONSULTATIONS SHOULD

FOCUS ON QUALITY OF PREPARATIONS AND MODALITIES FOR POSSIBLE HLM. WE PRESENTLY FAVOR DESIGNATION OF SAEP AS THE INTERGOVERNMENTAL PREPARATORY BODY FOR SUBSTANTIVE ASPECTS HLM, USING WORKING GROUPS AS APPROPRIATE. PROCEDURAL PREPARATIONS COULD PERHAPS BEST BE LEFT WITH SECRETARIAT TO AVOID CUMBERSOME CONSENSUS PROCEDURE OF SAEP, WHICH WOULD OF COURSE CONTINUE APPROPRIATE OVERSIGHT ROLE. WE WOULD FAVOR GENEVA AS SITE FOR HLM IN ORDER TO TAKE ADVANTAGE OF FACILITIES IN BEING AND MINIMIZE COSTS. HABIB

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